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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0641
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHMMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 2330
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 4675
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 0179
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 2884
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 6117
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7637
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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3657
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3640
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SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OIIP KMDR KPAO JA

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN AT MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

¶1. LEAD STORIES: There were no papers published on Monday morning due to a press holiday. Broadcasters reported on a wildfire caused by a heat wave that killed at least 108 people in southern Australia.

¶2. "U.S. Wooing Europe" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri reported from Munich (2/8): "During the Munich security conference, Vice President Biden delivered a speech calling for the establishment of a 'strong partnership' with European countries. The call reflected the Obama administration's desire to reconstruct the trans-Atlantic relationship, which cooled under the former Bush administration, and to jointly tackle such pressing issues as the financial crisis and the war on terrorism. The focus from now will be on whether they can deliver specific achievements on issues such as the reconstruction of Afghanistan."

¶3. "Europeans Welcoming U.S. Courting" The liberal Tokyo Shimbun wrote from Munich (2/8): "Vice President Biden's address at the Munich security confab represented the Obama administration's policy of departing from former President Bush's unilateralism and improving ties with Russia. While the West Europeans are welcoming Washington's policy turnaround toward international coordination, countries in East Europe appear to have mixed feelings about it given that they have tried to counter Russia by relying on U.S. backing."

¶4. "U.S., Europe Looking to Greater Coordination" The liberal Mainichi stated in an article from Munich (2/8): "The Europeans are largely welcoming of Vice

President Biden's call for enhanced partnership with them, wishing for greater cooperation in such areas as global warming and climate change. At the same time, they are also wary about the U.S. potentially prodding them to shoulder an excessive burden in view of Washington's plan to ask the Europeans to commit more troops in Afghanistan.... Greater policy coordination in trans-Atlantic ties also depends on whether the two parties can narrow differences over their respective approaches toward Russia."

¶5. "Progress Possible in Nuclear Reductions" A Munich correspondent for the business-oriented Nikkei said (2/8): "Given that it has strongly opposed former President Bush's unilateral line, Russia is likely to welcome a U.S. policy change, which was expressed by Vice President Biden, especially at a time when it has little room to increase military tensions with Washington due to the rapid deterioration of its economy.... As Washington has recently responded positively to Moscow's call for new negotiations on a post-START I nuclear arms reduction pact, enhanced coordination between the U.S. and Russia on this front would help apply the brake to an arms race by developing countries."

ZUMWALT